AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A documents control apparatus that can share with another documents control apparatus an attribute attached to a document, comprising:

an attribute sharing unit <u>configured to share</u> ~~that shares~~ said attribute <u>attached to the document</u> with said other documents control apparatus;

an edit processing unit <u>configured to edit process</u> ~~that edit processes~~ said attribute; ~~and~~

a switching unit <u>configured to determine</u> ~~that determines~~ whether said attribute is shared with said other documents control apparatus by said attribute sharing unit and, based on the determination by said switching unit, ~~controls~~ <u>configured to control</u> edit processing on said attribute by said edit processing unit<u>;</u>

<u>a documents controlling unit configured to control documents;</u>

<u>an attribute attaching unit configured to attach said attribute to each document controlled by said documents controlling unit, said attribute including an item type, a name of said item type, and an item type value; and</u>

<u>an item type defining unit configured to assign one or more item types to said attribute attached to each document by said attribute attaching unit.</u>

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an attribute identification information setting unit ~~that sets~~ <u>configured to set</u> attribute identification information of said attribute for identifying said attribute; and

an inhibiting unit ~~that determines~~ configured to determine whether, if said attribute is

edited by said edit processing unit, said attribute identification information setting unit needs

to change said attribute identification information set for identifying said attribute, and, based

on the determination by said inhibiting unit, ~~causes~~ is configured to cause said edit processing

unit to not edit said attribute.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim

1, further comprising:

an attribute identification information setting unit ~~that sets~~ configured to set attribute

identification information of said attribute for identifying said attribute; and

a displaying unit ~~that indicates~~ configured to indicate whether the edit processing by

said edit processing unit changes said attribute identification information of said attribute.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim

1, further comprising:

an attribute identification information setting unit ~~that sets~~ configured to set attribute

identification information of said attribute for identifying said attribute; and

an edit processing informing unit ~~that informs~~ configured to inform, if edit processing

by said edit processing unit changes said attribute identification information of said attribute,

said other documents control apparatus of information of said edit processing so that said

other documents control apparatus can execute an identical edit processing on said attribute.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim

1, further comprising:

an attribute identification information setting unit ~~that sets~~ configured to set attribute

identification information of said attribute for identifying said attribute;

an edit history information generating unit ~~that generates~~ configured to generate, if

edit processing by said edit processing unit changes said attribute identification information

of said attribute, edit history information of said edit processing; and

an edit history information transmitting unit ~~that transmits~~ configured to transmit said

edit history information to said other documents control apparatus.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim

1, further comprising an attribute identification information setting unit ~~that sets~~ configured

to set attribute identification information of said attribute for identifying said attribute;

wherein said edit processing unit, if edit processing by said edit processing unit that

changes said attribute identification information of said attribute is requested, ~~prevents~~ is

configured to prevent said attribute from changing.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim

1, further comprising:

~~a documents controlling unit that controls documents;~~

~~an attribute attaching unit that attaches said attribute to each document controlled by~~

~~said documents controlling unit, said attribute including an item type, a name of said item~~

~~type, and an item type value;~~

~~an item type defining unit that assigns one or more item types to said attribute~~

~~attached to each document by said attribute attaching unit;~~

a name attaching unit ~~that attaches~~ configured to attach a name to said item type

defined by said item type defining unit; and

a document copying unit ~~that copies~~ <u>configured to copy</u> said document to said other documents control apparatus.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 7, further comprising an attribute storing unit ~~that stores~~ <u>configured to store</u> said attribute, said item type, the name of said item type, and said item type value.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said edit processing unit ~~retrieves and edits~~ <u>is configured to retrieve and edit</u> said attribute, said item type, the name of said item type, and said item value stored in said attribute storing unit.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said attribute attaching unit ~~correlates~~ <u>is configured to correlate</u> said document controlled by said documents controlling unit with an attribute retrieved from said attribute storing unit.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said document controlling unit ~~stores~~ <u>is configured to store</u> said document and said correlated attribute.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 5, further comprising a document attribute edit history storing unit that, when said edit processing changes said attribute identification information of said attribute, ~~stores~~ <u>is configured to store</u> said edit history information of said edit processing.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said attribute storing unit ~~further stores~~ is further configured to store information indicating reference to said attribute, said item type, the name of said item type, and said item value.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said attribute storing unit ~~further stores~~ is further configured to store information related to an item included in said attribute.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 14, wherein said attribute storing unit ~~further stores~~ is further configured to store information indicating correlation between said item included in said attribute and location in which said item is stored.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 7, further comprising an analysis processing unit ~~that retrieves~~ configured to retrieve said documents from said documents controlling unit and ~~analyzes~~ configured to analyze said retrieved documents based on designated condition.

Claim 17 (Original): The documents control apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an attribute shared by said attribute sharing unit with said other documents control apparatus, the attribute including information for identifying said other documents control apparatus.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A documents control system, comprising a plurality of documents control apparatuses connected via a network, ~~each~~ the plurality of documents control apparatus being as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A computer readable recording medium, storing a computer program that causes a computer to function as:

an attribute sharing unit <u>configured to share</u> ~~that shares~~ an attribute with ~~another~~ a documents control apparatus; ~~and~~

an edit processing unit <u>configured to switch</u> ~~that switches~~, depending on whether said attribute sharing unit shares said attribute with said ~~other~~ documents control apparatus, edit processing on said attribute<u>;</u>

<u>a documents controlling unit configured to control documents;</u>

<u>an attribute attaching unit configured to attach said attribute to each document controlled by said documents controlling unit, said attribute including an item type, a name of said item type, and an item type value; and</u>

<u>an item type defining unit configured to assign one or more item types to said attribute attached to each document by said attribute attaching unit.</u>

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): A method of controlling an attribute of a document comprising ~~the steps of~~:

<u>controlling documents;</u>

receiving a request for edit processing on an attribute;

determining whether said attribute is shared among a plurality of documents control apparatuses and, if so shared, whether said edit processing changes attribute identification information of said attribute; ~~and~~

attaching attributes to each document controlled by the controlling, the attributes

including an item type, a name of the item type, and an item type value;

defining item types by assigning one or more types to said attribute attached to each

document by said attribute attaching unit; and

switching over, if said attribute is shared among the plurality of documents control

apparatuses and said edit processing changes attribute identification information of said

attribute, said edit processing to an edit processing that does not change said attribute

identification information.

Claim 21 (New): The document control apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the

item type defining unit includes:

a graphical user interface configured to display the attributes and the attribute item

types for manual modification of the attribute items types.

Claim 22 (New): The computer readable recording medium according to Claim 19,

wherein the computer program stored on the computer readable recording medium further

causes a computer to function as:

a graphical user interface configured to display the attributes and the attribute item

types for manual modification of the attribute items types.